

**Northeast RAP Meeting
October 7th, 2015
Clark, SD**

RAP members in attendance

Rick Hentges
Dick Pearson
Neil Bien
Bob Olson
John Johnson
Lee Schull
Taylor Anderson
Rick Smith

GFP staff in attendance

Scott Lindgren
Jacquie Ermer
Tom Kirschenmann
Mark Ermer
Scott Simpson
Mike Klosowski
Chris Goldade

Public

None

RAP members absent

Bob Tiff
Julie Johnson

Scott Lindgren GFP Regional Supervisor

- Scott Lindgren introduced the RAP members to the new member, Taylor Anderson. Taylor is a chiropractor in Aberdeen and lives in Groton. He does most of his hunting in the Claremont area of Brown County. There was a general discussion and some questions about the habitat tour that some of the attendees participated in prior to the meeting. There was some discussion on the Clark and Brown County deer study. Scott reviewed what was discussed at the last meeting and gave updates on that information.

RAP member reports:

Neil Bien: Neil spent 18 days in the hospital but is healthy again. In Marshall County fishing is not as hot as it used to be, but there are still plenty of good spots to fish. He has seen quite a few turkeys, a few grouse and pheasants. There are fewer geese in his area than last year, but hunting is still good. There are good numbers of ducks in his area and the youth hunters on his land had excellent success.

Dick Pearson: Fishing is hot in the Day county area with lots of users on the lakes. The duck numbers are the best he has seen in 12 years. The Canada goose numbers are clearly down. Hunters in his area had to travel more than in past years to harvest geese. He contacted 3 landowners in his area prior to the meeting and none of them had serious damage from geese. One of them did not agree with the egg drilling policy and all of them agreed that there were still plenty of geese in the area and that WDM efforts should not be reduced. He has seen many deer in the area with some very young fawns and the grouse numbers seem good with some groups of 12-15 birds.

John Johnson: The ducks in his area of Day and Codington Counties are concentrated on the larger bodies of water with fewer geese in the area than in the past. He has seen some grouse but has seen more turkeys than before. The deer numbers seem good and some does have been seen with young fawns. The fishing pressure at Bitter Lake is very high.

Bob Olson: He reported dry conditions in Edmunds County for duck hunting and considerably fewer geese in the area. He has heard reports of good duck hunting in the Frederick area in flooded crop fields. He reported good fishing in Day County with a lot of non-resident fishermen in the area. He also reported good numbers for the deer herd in the area.

Taylor Anderson: He also reported good duck hunting in the Frederick area but all the small wetlands in the Claremont area are dry. He saw good numbers of youth pheasant hunters out during the season but not as many goose hunters as past years. He has seen some radio collared deer on his trail cams. He reported trying his luck with fishing on Lynn Lake, Dry Lake #2, and Horseshoe.

Lee Schull: He reported active tiling in the Goose Lake area. He said that fishing was good. He reported many deer on his property with several non-typical bucks, pheasant numbers were good as were turkey. He has not seen any geese and reported seeing a total of 2 teal.

Rick Smith: He reported 30-60 boats a day using the lake near his home in Hamlin County this summer. There were many resident and non-resident users. Now there are very few people fishing the lake and he feels that most of the fish have been harvested. He reported timely rains most of the summer with good harvest weather this fall. He reported that the deer in his area are limited by the amount of habitat available and that he saw more deer earlier in the year than he has lately.

Rick Hentges: Ducks in the Grant county area are concentrated in wetlands that still have water. There are many ducks in the area and hunting is good. Goose numbers in the area are down from past years but he reports that the current population is about right. He has seen many deer and several does with fawns. He also reported active tiling in the area. The turkey population is good and the pheasant population is limited by the amount of available habitat.

PRESENTATIONS

Tom Kirschenmann

- Gave an update on the Governor's Habitat Work Group
- He passed out a handout listing the 8 recommendations given by the work group and reviewed some of these recommendations
- The first was the launching of the website and campaign—Habitat Pays. This is a web based, one stopped shop for anyone interested in the options available to develop habitat on their land
- Discussed the Habitat Conservation Fund. A board of advisors has been put together and money from this fund will be used in large and small grants. He gave handouts outlining these grants and applications are due by the end of November
- He discussed the mowing of road right of ways. The current rules only apply to state highways. Discussion with DOT on these regulations is ongoing with no decisions yet
- Crop insurance is now available for winter wheat crops in all counties of the state
- More information on the grant programs was discussed – money can only go to a non-profit group. One example of a program that may use this money is the reimbursement for planting saline soil areas to grass cover. There is over \$600,000 in the fund.

Jacquie Ermer

- Gave an update on the Canada Goose Stakeholders meeting. There are a total of 20 people in this group with some from every region.
- The first meeting was mainly on the history and biology of geese and the depredation program
- They also discussed ideas and any problems that could be considered

- John Johnson stated that it seems the biggest issues with geese are in Region 4. He stated that one issue was that landowners wanted to email to get a kill permit and he did not agree with this. He feels that GFP did the best job they could with the Canada goose issues.
- Some common themes with Canada goose management discussed at the meeting were: The population index goal of the current plans is 80-90,000, is this a realistic goal and if not what should it be; what depredation tools should be used; what could be done for habitat and access to hunt geese.
- There was a lengthy discussion by the group on the number of geese in the state and what tools could or should be used to manage the numbers.
- *Scott requested an update on the 2015 Canada Goose season, stakeholders meeting, and management plan at the Jan-Feb RAP panel meeting
- The update on the Turkey Management Plan was postponed until the next meeting

Scott Simpson

- Presented data on resident and non-resident sportsmen in South Dakota
- He presented a handout with information on license sales and harvest data
- Summary:
 - 1st page
 - -Fishing – resident numbers have been steady
 - -Non-resident numbers increase every year
 - -Residents fish an average of 18 days/year
 - -Non-residents fish an average of 10 days/year
 - 2nd page
 - Fish
 - -47% of Residents fish east river
 - -31% of Residents fish the Missouri river
 - -50% of Non-residents fish the Missouri river
 - -40% of Non-residents fish east river
 - -Residents spend 4 times as many days fishing as non-residents
 - -Walleye #1 species harvested by both
 - -More perch harvested by Residents than Non-residents
 - 3rd page
 - Deer
 - -# of licenses reduced in recent years therefore both Resident and Non-resident #s are down
 - -# of days hunted much higher by Residents than Non-residents
 - 4th page
 - Pheasants
 - -Resident licenses up and down
 - -Non-resident license #s up and down but more drastic
 - -# days hunted up and down for both
 - -Residents hunted more days than Non-residents on average
 - -Non-residents harvested more birds than Residents
 - -Resident and Non-resident revenue has been steady, Non-resident license sales count for 1/3 of our budget
- Discussion on budgeting, projections on budgets, and fees
- More discussion on limiting Non-resident fishing and increasing fees for fishing and small game licenses.

- Scott Simpson pointed out that Non-residents are paying roughly \$16 in license fees for every bird they harvest
- Mark pointed out that non-resident fishermen license revenue is 65%, where resident revenue is 35%, but non-resident only harvest 35% of the walleyes and 20% of perch each year.
- There was a lengthy discussion on non-resident licenses and caps on the # of licenses

Scott Lindgren

- Short wrap up of the meeting /highlights of the meeting

Topics/Ideas for next meeting:

- Update on the 2015 Canada goose season, stakeholders meeting, and management plan
- Turkey Management Plan
- Discussion on fish populations in Bitter and Waubay Lake
- Mercury levels in fish update